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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 09/720,682 | 07/27/2001 | Paul Winfield Blacknell | 0866/01083 | 4998 |

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EITAN, PEARL, LATZER & COHEN ZEDEK LLP
10 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, SUITE 1001
NEW YORK, NY 10020

EXAMINER

BATES, KEVIN T

| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|
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2155

DATE MAILED: 10/21/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/720,682

Applicant(s)

BLACKNELL ET AL.

Examiner

Kevin Bates

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 July 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12-26-00.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to a communication made on July 27, 2001.

The Information Disclosure Statement was received on December 26, 2000.

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-2, 7, and 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Thessin (5452299).

Regarding claim 1, Thessin discloses a method for sharing data files among multiple participants wherein each participant has a conference station for sharing said data file in a conference (Column 2, lines 60 – 65), said method comprising the steps of: routing a data file that includes at least one data object to each one of the participants (Column 4, lines 43 – 53) before the conference is commenced (Column 7, lines 48 – 52); assigning to each data object of said document an identifier for indicating the last modification of said data object (Column 10, lines 39 – 44); establishing a conference and distributing a list of data object identifications among said participants and the data objects which need to be modified during said conference (Column 6, lines 61 – 68); generating a shared document that comprises at least one data object at each participant (Column 4, lines 49 – 62); editing said at least one data object for providing a modified data object (Column 13, lines 1 – 16) and distributing the modified data object

among said participants for updating said shared document of each participants (Column 14, lines 47 – 56).

Regarding claim 2, Thessin discloses that said step of routing comprises the step of routing said data file by digital routing means (Column 5, lines 45 – 54).

Regarding claim 3, Thessin discloses that said digital routing means comprises a file transfer protocol (Column 13, line 63 – Column 14, line 4).

Regarding claim 7, Thessin discloses the steps of: assigning an identifier for each modification of said data file once said conference has commenced (Column 10, lines 39 – 43); requesting a modified list of identifiers (Column 12, lines 54 – 58; Column 13, lines 6 – 9); and distributing said modified list of identifiers to said requestor (Column 12, lines 13 – 20).

Regarding claim 9, Thessin discloses the step of generating further comprises the step of creating a link from said data object at said shared document to said data file (Column 8, lines 35 – 42).

Regarding claim 10, Thessin discloses that the step of editing further comprises the steps of: requesting said data file from the data file owner (Column 11, lines 41 – 52); and editing said data object with an application (Column 10, lines 22 – 27) which functions to generate said data file at a requestor station for providing a modified data object linked to said shared document (Column 13, lines 5 – 16).

Regarding claim 11, Thessin discloses that said data object comprises presentation data (Column 4, lines 58 – 66).

Regarding claim 12, Thessin discloses a method for modifying a shared document during a conference comprising a plurality of participants, said shared document including presentation data and a data file which comprises information associated with said presentation data the method (Column 2, lines 60 – 65) comprising the steps of: marking said data file and said presentation data; routing said presentation data to each participant (Column 4, lines 43 – 53) before the conference commences (Column 7, lines 48 – 52); establishing a conference and subsequently distributing said presentation data among said participants (Column 7, lines 48 – 55); generating said shared document that comprises said presentation data that is linked to said data file (Column 8, lines 5 – 42); distributing said data file to a participant who requested to edit said shared document (Column 11, lines 41 – 52); editing the presentation data at said data file for providing modified presentation data (Column 10, lines 22 – 27); distributing said modified presentation data among said plurality of participants (Column 7, lines 16 – 19); and updating said shared document file in accordance with said editing modification (Column 13, lines 5 – 16).

Regarding claim 13, Thessin discloses that the step of linking said presentation data with said data file is performed via means of object linking and editing (OLE) (Column 8, lines 35 – 42).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5, 6, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thessin in view of Banavar (6425016).

Regarding claim 5, Thessin discloses said step of assigning further comprises the steps of: assigning a unique identifier for each data file (Column 10, lines 39 – 44); but does not explicitly indicate assigning a digital signature to each data object within said data file. Banavar teaches a collaborative system which uses shared objects (Column 4, lines 4 – 12) that discloses assigning a virtual time stamp (VT) to each object (Column 4, lines 58 – 65) which is signature corresponding to the change of the object. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use Banavar's teaching of using a identifier to describe the actions of a transaction made on an object in Thessin's system in order to clearly identify the change that has been made on an object based on the time the change was made (Column 10, lines 35 – 43) thus nodes can identify by the identifier and the time of a modification (Column 5, lines 1 – 6).

Regarding claims 6 and 8, Thessin in view of Banavar discloses that said digital signature is a time step for designating the last modification of said data object (Column 3, lines 23 – 27).

Claims 14-15 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thessin in view of Aldred (5649105).

Regarding claim 14, Thessin discloses that the steps of comparing presentation data among said participants for generating a file that includes modifications of said

presentation data (Column 15, lines 6 – 11); and distributing said file among said participants (Column 15, lines 11 – 29), but Thessin does not explicitly indicate compressing said file. Aldred discloses a collaborative working environment (Column 3, lines 37 – 44) where compression is a big part of the transmission between participants (Column 5, line 63 – Column 6, line 4). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use Aldred's teaching of compressing files sent between collaborating systems in order to decrease the amount of time spent updating modifications by having smaller amount of information that needs to be sent with each modification (Thessin, Column 2, lines 40 – 54).

Regarding claim 15, Thessin in view of Aldred discloses a system having a plurality of conferencing stations operably coupled to at least one communication network, said system for sharing data files among a plurality of participants in a conference (Column 2, lines 60 – 65), wherein said conferencing station comprises: a routing application for routing a data file which includes at least one data object to each said participant (Column 4, lines 43 – 53) before the conference is commenced (Column 7, lines 48 – 52); an identification application for assigning to each data object of said document an identifier for indicating the last modification of said data object (Column 6, lines 61 – 68); a conferencing application for establishing a conference and controlling distribution of a list of data object identifications among said participants (Column 6, lines 38 – 45); an electronic whiteboard for viewing and editing a shared document (Column 8, lines 5 – 18); an editing application for editing said data file (Column 10, lines 22 – 27); a compressor for compressing modifications of said data file (Aldred,

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Column 5, line 63 – Column 6, line 4); and a distribution application for distributing modifications of said data file among said plurality of participants (Column 7, lines 16 – 19).

Regarding claim 17, Thessin discloses said routing application comprises file transfer protocol (Column 13, line 63 – Column 14, line 4).

Regarding claim 18, Thessin discloses at least one communication network comprises a packet switched network (Column 6, lines 22 – 26).

Regarding claim 19, Thessin discloses at least one communication network comprises a local area network (Column 6, lines 22 – 26).

Claim 4 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thessin in view of Clements (6182080).

Regarding claim 4, Thessin does not explicitly indicate that said digital routing means comprises electronic mail. Clements discloses a sharing document system which discloses distributing modified files through an email system (Column 15, lines 44 – 60). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use email to distributed files that are modified to uses participating in a collaborative system in order to allow comments and simultaneous broadcasts of the altered files (Column 15, line 61 – Column 16, line 6).

Claim 16 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thessin in view of Aldred as applied to claims 14-15 and 17-19 above, and further in view of Clements.

Regarding claim 16, Thessin does not explicitly indicate that said digital routing means comprises electronic mail. Clements discloses a sharing document system which discloses distributing modified files through an email system (Column 15, lines 44 – 60). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use email to distributed files that are modified to uses participating in a collaborative system in order to allow comments and simultaneous broadcasts of the altered files (Column 15, line 61 – Column 16, line 6).

Prior Art

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U. S. Patent No. 5583993 issued to Foster, because it discloses sharing documents among multiple users.

U. S. Patent No. 5764902 issued to Rothrock, because it discloses sharing objects among users with identifiers that match modifications.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Bates whose telephone number is (703) 605-0633 or (571) 272-3980 after October 27, 2004. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hosain Alam can be reached on (703) 308-6662. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

WB

KB
October 14, 2004


HOSAIN ALAM
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER